

Office of Financial Institutions
EDUCATIONAL LEAVE/TUITION REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

I. POLICY

The Office of Financial Institutions supports and encourages employees in their efforts to enhance their educational qualifications for positions in their career path. Supervisors are encouraged to exercise flexibility in arranging work schedules to permit employees to take advantage of available educational opportunities during off-duty hours, whenever possible.

In accordance with Civil Service Rule 11.24(B), educational leave with pay may be granted to an employee for a maximum of thirty calendar days, or the equivalent in hours, in one calendar year for educational purposes. Such leave must be requested and approved in advance, and the course(s) taken must be pertinent and directly related to the work of the employee. Such leave that is only remotely related to the employee's work must not be approved. If the department requires an employee to take special training, leave with pay may be granted for a maximum of ninety days in one calendar year.

An appointing authority may provide reimbursement, or a portion thereof, for tuition fees to employees who successfully complete courses that are pertinent to their present positions or that might enhance their ability to perform in higher level positions in their career path and thus increase their chances for promotion. **This reimbursement will involve only that portion of the total fees identified as tuition and not books, supplies, and other miscellaneous fees.** Reimbursement can apply to courses taken after hours as well as the courses taken while on educational leave.

II. DEFINITION

A. Educational leave includes the following:

1. Leave with pay for either optional or required work-related formal training at a school or educational facility taken for an extended period. Leave slips must be submitted when educational leave is taken. An example of educational leave is attending a college course three times a week. The employee may submit one leave slip that would cover the entire two-week pay period, including the travel time. A maximum total of six hours per week/240 hours per year for optional educational leave, and twelve hours per week/720 hours per year for required educational coursework may be allowed.

B. Educational leave does not include:

1. Short-term work related schools, seminars, workshops, etc. When an employee is sent to training sessions, such as a CPTP class, classes for OFI examiners to obtain required training, general workshops, etc., no leave slip is required. Time spent in attending such training is considered work time.
2. Attendance at non work-related schools or training.

III. CRITERIA FOR EDUCATIONAL LEAVE

- A. Must be a full-time permanent employee.
- B. Must have a satisfactory service rating.
- C. Employees previously granted educational leave must have earned a passing grade in the course(s) for which leave was granted to be eligible for further educational leave.
- D. Approval of educational leave is contingent upon proof of acceptance by the school or educational facility.
- E. Educational leave may be granted to an employee only when hours of class attendance conflict with the employee's normal working hours and when such conflict cannot be resolved through making reasonable schedule changes.

IV. REQUESTS FOR EDUCATIONAL LEAVE

- A. Requests for educational leave for courses taken must be made in advance in writing to the Appointing Authority. The following shall be included in the request submitted by the employee:
 1. The course title, number, and description.
 2. The name of the school or educational facility.
 3. Dates and times that the employee will be required to be absent from his position for participation in the course.
 4. A narrative explaining how participation in the course will enhance the employee's performance in his present position or better prepare the employee for promotional opportunity in his career path.

- B. The supervisor/manager shall make a recommendation that shall include an assessment of the impact on the activities of the work unit, and whether the course is related to the employee's work.
- C. All requests for educational leave will be approved or disapproved by the Appointing Authority or his designee, and the employee and supervisor will be notified of the decision.

V. REIMBURSEMENT OF TUITION FEES

- A. Requests for reimbursement of tuition must be made in advance in writing to the Commissioner. Reimbursement is limited to one course per semester. Funds for reimbursement must be available within OFI's budget. At the conclusion of the course, prior to reimbursement the employee must submit the following documentation:
 - 1. Proof of successful completion of the course.
 - 2. Proof that the employee received a grade of at least "C" for an undergraduate course, or a "B" for a graduate course.
 - 3. Documentation of payment for the course; tuition amount must be clearly indicated on the fee bill or other official university publication. NOTE: Employee may not claim reimbursement for tuition paid by a source other than the employee, such as a grant, scholarship, etc.
 - 4. Employee must agree to repay OFI for the full tuition reimbursement if he/she voluntarily leaves OFI employment within six months of completing the course for which tuition reimbursement was received and to repay OFI for one-half the tuition reimbursement if he/she voluntarily leaves between six months and one year of completing the course.

APPROVED BY:



John Ducrest, CPA
Commissioner

March 8, 2005

Date